

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figures 3 and 6. These sheets replace the original sheets which include Figures 3 and 6. In order to be consistent with the specification, Figure 3 has been amended so that the text referred to by reference number 328 has been changed to "Hard Disk Drive." Also for the sake of consistency with the specification, the text annotating the point referred to by reference number 602 has been changed to "Pj (Xj, Yj, Zj)" and the text annotating the point referred to by reference number 601 has been changed to "Pi (Xi, Yi, Zi)." Previously omitted reference numbers 521 and 101 have also been added to Figure 6 for clarity and consistency.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the Office Action mailed November 17, 2006 have been carefully considered. Claims 1-7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to pursue claims 1-7 in a later filed continuation application. Claims 8-22 have been newly added and are now pending. Support for these changes can be found throughout the specification and figures. The specification has been amended for clarity and consistency. Figures 3 and 6 have been amended to be more consistent with the specification and to add omitted item numbers. No new matter has been added.

Applicant respectfully requests reexamination and allowance of claims 8-22.

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Editorial revisions have been made to the specification. The specification has also been amended for clarity and consistency. For example, the two paragraphs beginning at page 12, line 8 and page 12, line 16 have been amended to be consistent with Figure 6. In particular, the terms "V_j" and "V_k" were formerly transposed in the specification. The amended paragraphs now recite the terms V_j and V_k in a manner consistent with the illustration of Figure 6. No new matter has been added.

DRAWING AMENDMENTS

Figures 3 and 6 have been amended to be more consistent with the specification and to add omitted reference numbers. No new matter has been added.

FORMAL OBJECTIONS

Formal objection has been made to the Abstract for exceeding 150 words. A replacement Abstract has been submitted herewith. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Formal objection has been made to claim 5 due to an antecedent basis matter. Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the objection moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-4, 6, and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,338,198 to Wu et al., in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0017369 to Hultgren et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, claims 1-4, 6, and 7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicant does not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu, in view of Hultgren, and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2005/020075 to Taub et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicant does not concede the correctness of the rejection.

NEW CLAIMS

Claims 8-22 have been added. Support for these claims can be found throughout the specification and figures. To the extent the above rejections apply to claims 8-22, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 8 recites, in part, a first plate module including a plurality of alignment spheres and a second plate module including a plurality of alignment spheres. The second plate module is configured to couple to operably couple to the first plate module using an articulation device to form a combined apparatus.

None of the references cited in the Office Action disclose or suggest a first plate module including a plurality of alignment spheres and a second plate module including a plurality of alignment spheres. Furthermore, none of the cited references disclose or suggest such plate modules coupled together using an articulation device.

For at least these reasons, the combination of Wu, Hultgren, and Taub does not anticipate or suggest the invention of claim 8. Claims 9-19 depend from claim 8 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 8-19 is respectfully requested. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 20 recites, in part, arranging a first physical model on a scanning device, the first physical model associated with a first alignment sphere, a second alignment sphere, and a third alignment sphere. Claim 20 also recites determining a first vector crossing a first edge point and a second edge point of a physical model and locating the first alignment sphere at a first location being located along the first vector.

None of the references cited in the Office Action disclose or suggest arranging a first physical model on a scanning device, the first physical model associated with a first alignment sphere, a second alignment sphere, and a third alignment sphere. Furthermore, none of the references disclose or suggest determining a first vector crossing a first edge point and a second edge point of a physical model and locating the first alignment sphere at a first location being located along the first vector.

For at least these reasons, the combination of Wu, Hultgren, and Taub does not anticipate or suggest the invention of claim 20. Claims 21 and 22 depend from claim 20 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 20-22 is respectfully requested. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

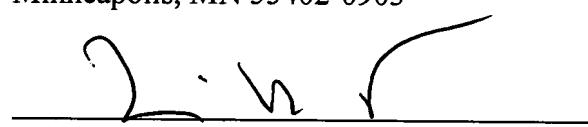
CONCLUSION

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the above amendments. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicant's attorney below at 612.336.4755.

Respectfully submitted,

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